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**Over and Thoms on the Birds of South Dakota.**<sup>1</sup>—This well printed bulletin consists of two parts the first dealing with "Bird Study" and the second consisting of a list of the birds of the state with brief descriptions, while there are numerous excellent illustrations of birds and nests, from photographs from life.

Part I, contains brief and for the most part reliable data on various phases of economic ornithology, protective coloration, molt, and migration covering such questions as are likely to occur to the beginner. The explanation of seasonal changes of plumage on the grounds of protective coloration however does not seem satisfactory and the intimation that the male Goldfinch changes color in spring without a molt is contrary to the evidence furnished us by almost every museum collection. The list includes 322 species and subspecies and seems to have been carefully compiled, while doubtful specimens have been determined by the U. S. Biological Survey. The authors are to be congratulated upon their work which cannot help but fill a widely felt want and will lead many a would-be bird student to a better knowledge of ornithology.

It is regrettable that such an excellent bulletin should be marred by such a carelessly prepared bibliography. There is no uniformity in the citation of the papers and books, and from the information given it would be absolutely impossible to find many of them. "U. S. Geological Survey," and "State Game and Fish Com. Minneapolis" are not very definite references for one seeking certain publications.—W. S.

**Dwight and Griscom on *Atlapetes gutturalis*.**<sup>2</sup>—A careful study of much fresh material from Central America shows that five races of *Atlapetes gutturalis* are recognizable, three of which are here named for the first time: *A. g. parvirostris* (p. 3) from the Highlands of Costa Rica; *A. g. fuscipygius* (p. 3) from north central Nicaragua and *A. g. griseipectus* from Central Guatemala. The authors call attention to the fact that in old skins of this species, the color turns brown as in certain others already referred to by Dr. Chapman, so that they are useless for subspecific comparison.—W. S.

**Witherby's 'Handbook of British Birds.'**<sup>3</sup>—The eleventh part of Mr. Witherby's book completes the raptorial birds, and covers the storks, ibises, herons, swans and geese. There is an excellent colored plate of the bills

<sup>1</sup> Birds of South Dakota. By William H. Oyer and Craig S. Thoms. Bulletin 9. South Dakota Geol. and Nat. Hist. Survey. Series XXI, No. 9. March 1921. Bulletin Univ. of South Dakota. pp. 1-142. Many half-tones and colored frontispiece of Meadowlark.

<sup>2</sup> A Revision of *Atlapetes gutturalis* with Descriptions of Three New Races. By Jonathan Dwight and Ludlow Griscom, American Museum Novitates. No. 16, pp. 1-4, Sept. 9, 1921.

<sup>3</sup> A Practical Handbook of British Birds. Edited by H. F. Witherby Part XI. pp. 177-256. July 18, 1921. Price 4s. 6d. net per Part.

of the last two groups, and the usual pertinent text figures, including interesting diagrammatic sketches of the vultures in flight as viewed from below. While the nomenclature is in the main in accord with that of the A. O. U. 'Check-List' we notice that the egrets are all referred to *Egretta* and the swans to *Cygnus*, a treatment which we would heartily endorse. The snow geese are united with *Anser*, with perhaps less warrant, and the validity of *Anser albifrons gambeli* and *Branta bernicla glaucogaster* are questioned.—W. S.

**California Hawks: How to identify them.**<sup>1</sup>—This is a commendable attempt by Dr. H. C. Bryant to make possible the field identification of hawks by the average citizen. One key is given which is based on mode of flight, habits and general appearance, illustrated by outlines of flying birds of the four principal groups of hawks, and another, taking into account size and general coloration. The habits and economic value of hawks are concisely discussed with a modicum of illustration from California instances. The page of bibliography given will enable those so desiring to pursue the subject further. It is to be hoped that wide distribution of separates of this paper can be secured, and similar publications are much needed in all States. The general antipathy to hawks seems almost ineradicable, witness the fact that today bounties on these birds are specifically authorized in five of the States of the Union and may be paid in as many more.<sup>2</sup> Under the circumstances the more truth disseminated about these birds, the better.—W. L. M.

### The Ornithological Journals.

#### **Bird-Lore.** XXIII, No. 4. July-August, 1921.

The Yellow-breasted Chat and the Cowbird. By Wilbur F. Smith.—Describes a nest in which two young Cowbirds were raised by a pair of Chats. Usually Chats are supposed to desert a nest if a Cowbird's egg is deposited in it. The author voices the general condemnation of the Cowbird. Its peculiar parasitism is however one of the provisions of nature and why mankind should be expected to interfere in such cases is not quite clear. It would seem to be quite as cruel to kill a young Cowbird as a young Warbler or Sparrow.

The Mockingbird of the Arnold Arboretum. By C. H. Early.—Carries the history of this notable bird so fully described by the late Horace W. Wright (*Auk*, July, 1921) on for another year.

The Bird Bath in Molting Time. By Craig S. Thoms.—Considers an abundance of water a necessity at this time in the bird's life. A number of interesting photographs are presented.

<sup>1</sup> Calif. Fish and Game, Vol. 7, No. 3, July, 1921, pp. 133-147, figs. 42-49.  
<sup>2</sup> colored plates.

<sup>2</sup> See Farmers' Bull. 1238, Sept., 1921.